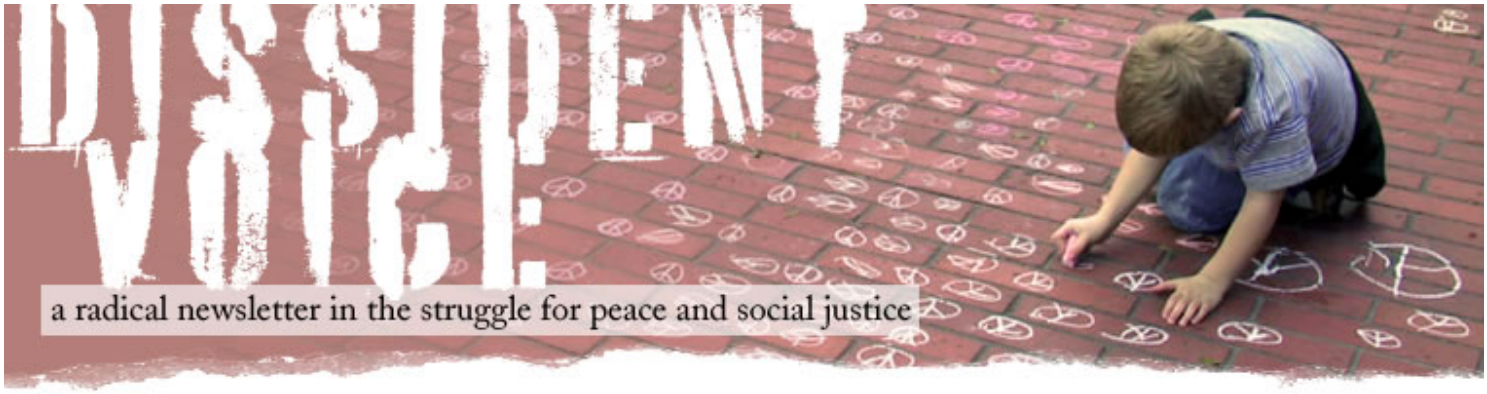

The Zionist-Nazi Collaboration

by William James Martin / July 8th, 2012

Both Nazism and Zionism arose in tandem from small insignificant social movements in the early part of the 20th century, arguing, with equal force, that Jews were an alien and indigestible mass living in the midst of an otherwise pure Aryan population. Both movements contributed to the more general acceptance of this argument in Europe, and particularly in Germany, as mid-century approached, and both have to be responsible for the consequences.

In 1896, journalist Theodore Herzl's book, *Der Judenstaat* (*The Jews' State*), Herzl expressed his understanding of inevitability, permanence, and omnipresence of anti-Semitism and argued that the only solution was a separate state for Jews. Herzl stated, in his book:

> The Jewish question exists wherever Jews live in perceptable numbers. Where it does not exist, it is carried by Jews in the course of their migrations. We naturally move to those places where we are not persecuted, and there our presence produces persecution. ... ((Herzl, Theodore, *The Jewish State*, p 9, 2007, BN Publishing))

In 1912, Chaim Weizman, Israel's first president, and the Zionist advocate who had the most to do with lobbying the British for the Balfour Declaration of 1917, echoed this view, speaking to a Berlin audience:

> ... each country can absorb only a limited number of Jews, if she doesn't want disorder in her stomach. Germany already has too many Jews. ((Weizmann))

Reflecting in 1949 in his autobiography, *Trial and Error*, Weizmann wrote:

> Whenever the quantity of Jews in any country reaches the saturation point, that country reacts against them ...

Weizmann, the chemist, invoking a metaphor from the sciences, added:

> ... the determining factor in this matter is not the is solubility of Jews, but the solvent power of the country. ... This cannot be looked upon as anti-Semitism in the ordinary or vulger sense of that word; it is a universal social and economic concomitant of Jewish immigration, and we cannot shake it off ... ((Weizmann, Chaim, *Trial and Error*, pv90-91))

Ben Frommer, an American Revisionist, stated in 1935:

> No matter what country he inhabits ... [it] is not of the [his] tribal origins. ... Consequently, the Jew's attempt at complete identity with his country sounds spurious; his patriotism despite his vociferousness [sounds] hollow even to himself; and therefore his demand for complete equality with those who are of the essence of the nation naturally creates friction. This explains the intolerance of the Germans, Austrians, Poles and the increasing tide of antagonism in most European countries ... It is presumptuous on the part of a Jew to demand that he be treated as lovingly as say a Teuton in a Teutonic country or a Pole in a Polish country. He must jealously guard his life and liberty, but he must candidly recognize that he does not 'belong'. *The liberal fiction of perfect equality is doomed because is was unnatural.* [Italics mine] ((Frommer, Ben, *The Significance of the Jewish State, Jewish Call*, (Shanghai, 1935), p 10-11.))

Indeed, in 1925, Jacob Klatzkin, the co-editor of the massive *Encyclopedia Judaica*, wrote:

> If our people is deserving and willing to live its own national life, then it is an alien body that insists on its own distinctive identity, reducing the domain of their life. It is right therefore, that they should fight against us for their national integrity ... Instead of establishing societies for defense against the anti-Semites, who want to reduce our rights, we should establish societies for defense against our friends who desire to defend our rights. ((Agus, Jacob, *The Meaning of Jewish History*, vol II, p 435.))

The understanding of Herzl, as well as the Zionists, about the inevitability of anti-Semitism was possibly self-fulfilling, for rather than opposing anti-Semitism in the first half of the 20th century, the Zionists found common cause with Hitler, Eichmann, and the Nazis and used anti-Semitism and Nazism as a means of achieving their end which was the establishment of a Jewish state. The two reactionary movements shared the view that German Jews were living in that country as a 'foreign race' and that the racial divide was essential to maintain. The Zionists' use of Nazism involved, among other things, the blocking of avenues of escape to other countries of Europe's Jews and diverting them to Palestine, even as the death trains began to roll in Europe. The rise of Nazism and Hitler to power was never, or almost never, opposed by the Zionists prior to the establishment of Israel.

Thus, in an article by Siegfried Moses, which appeared in the *Rundschau*, the official newspaper of the German Zionist Federation, and later, its head, stated:

> ... it is true that the defense against anti-Semitism is not our main task, it does not concern us to the same extent and is not of the same importance for us as is the work for Palestine ... ((Edelheim-Muehsam, Margaret, *Reactions of the Jewish Press to the Nazi Challenge*, Leo Baeck Institute Year Book, vol V, (1960), p 312.))

In 1934, Stephen Wise, head of the American Jewish Congress said:

> ... I cannot be indifferent to the Galuth [the Jewish diaspora living outside of Palestine] ... if I had to choose between Eretz Israel and its upbuilding and the defense of the Galuth, I would say that then the Galuth must perish. ((Rabbi Wise, *The New Palestine* (14 February 1934), p 5-7.))

On October 2, 1937, two SS officers, Herbert Hagen and Adolf Eichmann, disembarked in Haifa and were met by the Gestapo's agent in Palestine, Fritz Reichert, and later in the day, Fevel Polkes, a Haganah agent, who showed the Nazi officials Haifa from Mt Carmel and then visited a kibbutz. Some years later, when Eichmann was hiding in Argentina, he taped a story of his excursion to Palestine, stating:

> I did see enough to be very impressed with the way the Jewish colonists were building up their land. … In the years that followed I often said to Jews with whom I had dealings that had I been a Jew, I would have been a fanatical Zionist. ((Eichmann, Adolf, "Eichmann Tells His Own Damning Story", *Life* (28 Nov. 1960) p 22.))

Eichmann had read Herzl's book, *Der Judenstaat*, and also studied Hebrew. In their trip report, the two SS officers paraphrased Polkes's message to them:

> The Zionist state must be established by all means and as soon as possible. … When the Jewish state is established according to the current proposals laid down in the Peel paper, and in line with England's partial promises, then the borders may be pushed further outwards according to one wished. ((Polkehn, Klaus, "The Secret Contacts: Zionism and Nazi Germany 1933-41", *Journal of Palestine Studies* (Spring 1976), p 337.))

> … in Jewish nationalist circles people were very pleased with the radical German policy, since the strength of the Jewish population in Palestine would be so far increased thereby that in the foreseeable future the Jews could reckon upon numerical superiority over the Arabs in Palestine. ((Hohne, Heinz, *The Order of the Death's Head*, p 337.))

During his February trip to Berlin, Polkes proposed that the Haganah act as spies for the Nazi government and, as a sign of good faith, passed on intelligence information which was detrimental to their mutual enemies, the Communists. History might have been very different had the Zionist component of Jewry opposed Nazism; there might never have been a Holocaust. And there might never have been a state of Israel, as some Zionists well understood.

Lenni Brenner puts it:

> … of all of the active Jewish opponents of the boycott idea [of Nazi Germany], the most important was the world Zionists Organization (WZO). It not only bought German wares; it sold them, and even sought out new customers for Hitler and his industrialist backers.
>
> The WZO saw Hitler's victory in much the same way as its German affiliate, the ZVfD [the German Zionist Organization]: not primarily as a defeat for all Jewry, but as positive proof of the bankruptcy of assimilation and liberalism. ((Brenner, Lenni, *Zionism in the Age of Dictators*, Lawrence Hill, (1983).))

Here Brenner is referring to the so-called Ha'avara agreement, or 'transfer agreement'.

In 1933, Sam Cohen, owner of a citrus export company in Tel Aviv, approached the German government with the proposal that emigrants from Germany could avoid the flight tax by instead purchasing German products, which would then be shipped to Palestine, along with their purchasers, where the new arrivals in Palestine could then redeem their investments after the sale of the products by import merchants.

Heinrich Wolff, the German Consul in Jerusalem, quickly realized the utility of such an arrangement in tamping the international boycott effort of German import goods. He wrote to Berlin:

> Whereas in April and May the Yishuv [the European Jewish community in Palestine] was waiting boycott instructions from the United States, it now seems that the situation has been transformed. It is Palestine which now gives the instructions… It is important to break the

> boycott first and foremost in Palestine, and the effect will inevitably be felt on the main front, in the United States. ((In Yisraeli, David, "The Third Reich and the Transfer Agreement," *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. VI (1971), P 131.))

Cohen had promised Heinrich Wolff that he would work behind the scenes at the forthcoming Jewish conference in London to weaken or defeat any boycott resolution.

Dr Fritz Reichert, the Gestapo's agent in Palestine, later wrote to his headquarters:

> The London Boycott Conference was torpedoed from Tel Aviv because the head of the Transfer in Palestine, in close contact with the consulate in Jerusalem, sent cables to London. Our main function here is to prevent, from Palestine, the unification of world Jewry on a basis hostile to Germany … It is advisable to damage the political and economic strength of Jewry by sowing dissention in its ranks. ((In Yisraeli, David, "The Third Reich and the Transfer Agreement," *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. VI (1971), P 131.))

Negotiations with the Nazi government were taken over by the World Zionist Organization and Cohen was replaced by Chaim Arlosoroff, the Political Secretary of the Jewish Agency. Arlosoroff traveled to Berlin in May of 1933. He and the Nazis reached a preliminary understanding to continue Cohen's arrangement. Arlosoroff returned to Tel Aviv where he was assassinated, most probably by some members of the Revisionist wing of Zionism headed by Jabotinsky who opposed any accommodation with the Nazis.

Negotiations continued, however, and an agreement was signed in 1933 between the Nazis and the World Zionist Organization which persisted until 1939 and the German invasion of Poland. The Ha'arava grew to become a substantial banking and trading house with 137 specialists in its Jerusalem office at the height of its activities. The sale of German products expanded to include destinations outside of Palestine, but the arrangement remained essentially the same as the one originally negotiated by Sam Cohen – that German Jews wishing to emigrate, rather giving up most or all of their wealth to the German government, could invest their money in a German bank which would be used for purchasing German export goods. The purchaser could then redeem his investment when the goods had been sold and after he had arrived in Palestine. The German government set the rules and the emigrant would lose typically in excess of 30% of his investment and, eventually, 50%.

Indeed, there was a fundamental incompatibility with the upbuilding of a Jewish state in Palestine and opposition to the Nazi program of extermination of Europe's Jews. The Ha'avara agreement allowed the transfer of LP 8,100,000 (Palestinian Pounds; then $40,419,000) to Palestine along with 60,000 German Jews between 1933 and 1939. But it also had the effect of undercutting the international boycott effort and providing an inflow of capital to the German government owing to the sale of German manufactured goods abroad.

This understanding is important, as the Holocaust has been central in provoking sympathy for the State of Israel and in amplifying the claims for reparations from European governments. Sympathy for the victims of the Holocaust, whether Jews or Roma, is no less justified, but the state of Israel cannot maintain an air of complete innocence nor be the justified recipient of billions of dollars or reparations, very little of which is actually dispersed to Holocaust survivors.

Nor has Israel accepted the universal principle that states must pay reparations to ethnicities whom it has harmed, as Israel has ignored or denied the catastrophe of ethnic cleansing and massacres which it prosecuted against the Palestinian people in 1948.

The model of Jews fleeing a burning building; i.e., the Nazi Holocaust, and thus creating a redoubt of safety in the form of the state of Israel cannot be maintained. Aside from the fact that the Zionist project was initiated at least by the time of Herzl's *Der Judenstaat* of 1896 and his founding of the World Zionist Congress a year later, and well before the Nazi ascension to power in the 1930s, the Zionists were little concerned with the slaughter of Jews in Europe and almost exclusively focused on building a state in Palestine.

A proposal by the British, in the aftermath of Kristallnacht, of November 1938, that Britain admit a thousand children directly into Britain was sternly opposed by Ben Gurion who told a meeting of the Labor Zionist in December:

> If I knew that it would be possible to save all the children in Germany by bringing them over to England, and only half of them by transferring them to Eretz Israel, then I would opt for the second alternative. For we must weigh not only the life of these children, but also the history of the People of Israel. ((Gelber, Yoav, "Zionism and the Fate of European Jewry (1939-42)," *Yad Vashem Studies*, vol. XII, p 171.))

By 1943, ample reports of massacres of Europe's Jews were arriving in the US, though it garnered little of the mainstream press.

At this time, Peter Bergson, a Palestinian Jew and member of the Irgun, a militant offspring of the Revisionist Zionists, and his young colleagues, shifted their attention to saving Europe's Jews. Bergson, who had been sent to New York City, by Revisionists leader, Jaobtinsky, in order to create American support of the establishment of a Jewish army in Palestine, and his colleagues formed the Emergency Committee to Save Europe's Jews and initiated it with a conference attended by 1500 delegates including former President Herbert Hoover and New York Mayor Fiorello La Guardia. The delegates ultimately adopted an eight-point rescue program, the primary feature of which was the creation of a US government agency charged with saving Europe's Jews. They also called for their allies to immediately attack the concentration camps and bomb railroads lines leading to them.

The conference's program sought to avoid the issue of a Jewish state in Palestine, preferring to leave that to another day. Indeed, the efforts of Bergson were perceived by the American Jewish organizations, and especially by Rabbi Stephen Wise, head of the American Jewish Conference, as an effort to divert energy and attention away from Zionism and the upbuilding of a Jewish state in Palestine.

Bergson's group sponsored full page advertisements in the *New York Times* and other newspapers with such bold headlines as, "HELP Prevent 4,000,000 People from Becoming Ghosts." Another read, "THIS IS STRICTLY A RACE AGAINST DEATH."

The Emergency Committee also organized public events and rallies and a march by 450 Orthodox rabbis to the White House and the US Capitol. They also staged a theatrical production, entitled, *We Will Never Die*, authored by Academy Award winning screen writer Ben Hecht and included actors such as Edward G. Robinson with music written by Bertoldt Brecht. The play chronicled the contributions of Jews and addressed the current situation of Europe's Jews.

The production played to 40,000 in Madison Square Garden and, in Washington, was viewed by Eleanor Roosevelt and hundreds of members of Congress.

Though the Emergency Committee had raised the consciousness of Americans for the plight of Europe's Jews, their efforts were strongly opposed by America's organized Jewish groups including Rabbi Stephen Wise and his

American Jewish Congress.

In Buffalo, Baltimore, and Pittsburgh, local mainstream Jewish organizations attempted to block the production of *We Will Never Die*.

Most significant of the Emergency Committees' actions was to provoke the sponsorship of a resolution, introduced in the House by Baldwin and Will Rogers Jr., and in the Senate by Guy Gillette, on November 9, 1943.

The full text follows:

> Whereas the Congress of the United States, by concurrent resolution adopted on March 15 of this year, expressed its condemnation of Nazi Germany's 'mass murder of Jewish men, women, and children,' a mass crime which has already exterminated close to two million human beings, about 30 per centum of the total Jewish population of Europe, and which is growing in intensity as Germany approaches defeat; and
>
> Whereas the American tradition of justice and humanity dictates that all possible means be employed to save from this fate the surviving Jews of Europe, some four million souls who have been rendered homeless and destitute by the Nazis: therefore be it
>
> Resolved, That the House of Representatives recommends and urges the creation by the President of a commission of diplomatic, economic, and military experts to formulate and effectuate a plan of immediate action designed to save the surviving Jewish people of Europe from extinction at the hands of Nazi Germany.

Senator Gillette emphasized that the bill focused only on rescue and not on the issue of Palestine or a Jewish state.

It is not to be confused with the dispute over the future of Palestine, over a Jewish state or a Jewish army. The issue is non-sectarian. The sole object here is to rescue as many as possible of Hitler's victims, pending complete Allied victory.

Stephen Wise tried unsuccessfully to persuade the sponsors of the bill to withdraw their support. But failing that, Wise traveled to Washington and testified before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, chaired by Sol Bloom, stating that the resolution was "'inadequate" *because it did not urge the British government to open Palestine to Jewish refugees*" [italics mine]. ((Brownfield, Peter Egill, "The Jewish Establishment's Focus on Palestine: Did it Distract from Holocaust Efforts?" (Summer 2003).))

The lack of a reference to Palestine was, of course, intentionally absent from the bill.

Congressman Rogers also faced strong pressure from Zionists groups:

> When it became known that I was becoming a member of the Bergson group, there was a terrific amount of pressure from all sorts of areas. I went back to Beverly Hills and I remember meeting with Rabbi Stephen S Wise in a synagogue. … He took me aside and said, 'Now, young man. I knew your father very well. Now you are getting confused, you are getting mixed up with the wrong type of people. Let me tell you and steer you clear when it comes on, or want to meet the right people, the responsible people.' He was quite the diplomat. He didn't say, 'If you get mixed up with them, you are not going to be reelected.' He wasn't that direct, but he made every

> pressure that he could, and where he know it would be effective. ((*Ibid*. Also, Brenner Lenni, *Zionism in the Age of Dictators*.))

Gillette also faced strong opposition.

> These people used every effort, every means at their disposal, to block the resolution. … [They] tried to defeat it by offering and amendment, insisting on an amendment to it that would raise the question, the controversial question of Zionism or anti-Zionism … or anything that might stop or block the action that we were seeking. ((*Ibid*. Also, Brenner Lenni, *Zionism in the Age of Dictators*.))

On stationary with the letterhead of the American Jewish Congress, Stephen Wise wrote to Secretary of the Interior, Harold L. Ickles on December 23, 1943:

> I was very sorry to note, as were others among your friends, that you had accepted the Chairmanship of the Washington Division of the Committee to Rescue European Jews. … I do not like to speak ill of you, not of us, concerning a group of Jews, but I am under the inexorable necessity of saying to you that the time will come, and come soon, when you will find it necessary to withdraw from this irresponsible group, which exists and obtains funds through being permitted to use the names of non-Jews like yourself.

Nor was Bergson beyond the crosshairs of the American Zionists. Bergson received an offer from Congressman Samuel Dickstein (D-NY) to meet with him in his DC office where it turned out that several other US Congressmen had also assembled. He was told, as paraphrased by Bergson, that unless he 'behaved", "we will deport you. … One shouldn't mistake democracy with lawlessness, and don't feel that you can just come to this country without – on temporary visitor's visa and do whatever you wish …" ((*Ibid*. Also, Brenner Lenni, *Zionism in the Age of Dictators*.))

Despite the opposition of the American Zionist community, the bill passed the Senate Foreign Relations Committee unanimously only to die in the entire Senate.

According to a State Department memorandum, Rabbi Stephen Wise had expressed to State Department John Pehle, that Wise "had gone so far as to inform Mr Pehle that he regarded Bergson as equally great an enemy of the Jews as Hitler, for reasons that his activities could only lead to increased anti-Semitism." ((Brenner, Lenni, *Zionism in the Age of Dictators*, Lawrence Hill, (1983).))

Reports of atrocities and mass murders in the Ukraine began arriving in the west in 1941. In January 1942, the Soviets issued a report of the working of the Einsatzgruppen, or the SS, and in May of that year, the Bund, the Jewish Workers Union of Poland and Russia, which was anti-Zionist, sent London a radio message that 700,000 people, most Jews, were exterminated in Poland. This message was repeated on the BBC two months later.

In April, even before the Bund broadcast, Moshe Shertok, later to become Israel's second Prime Minister, wrote to British General and commander of the British Eight Army in North Africa:

> The destruction of the Jewish race is a fundamental tenet of the Nazi doctrine. The authoritative reports recently published show that that policy is being carried out with a ruthlessness which defies description … An even swifter destruction, it must be feared, would overtake the Jews of Palestine. ((Laqueur, "Jewish Denial and the Holocaust," *Commentary* (December 1979, p 46.))

The focus here is on the hypothetical Nazi attack on Palestine, not on the slaughter actually taking place in Europe, but based, nonetheless, on Shertok's understanding that such a slaughter was, in fact, taking place.

Despite the amply sufficient reports of massacres and exterminations, essentially nothing at all was done by the Zionist organizations, and reports of atrocities were consistently minimized.

Dov Joseph, acting director of the Jewish Agency's Political Department cautioned:

> … against publishing data exaggerating the number of Jewish victim, for if we announce that millions of Jews have been slaughtered by the Nazis, we will justifiably be asked where the millions of Jews are, for whom we claim that we shall need to provide a home in Eretz Israel after the war ends. ((Gelber, *Zionist Policy and the Fate of European Jewry*, p 195.))

Yitzhak Gruenbaum, leader of the Jewish Agency's Vaad Hazalah (Rescue Committee) who, in 1942 also believed the reports of atrocities taking place in Europe were exaggerated, offers a defense in his post war book, *Bi-mei Hurban ve Sho'ah* (*In the Days of Holocaust and Destruction*):

> I want to destroy this assumption [that the Zionist leadership was to blame that it did not do everything possible to help the European Jews] in order to take out people from the occupied countries … it would be necessary for the neutral countries to provide refuge, that the warring nations open their gates to the refugees. …
>
> How is it possible that in a meeting in Yerushalayim people will call: "If you don't have enough money you should take it from Keren Hayesod [the Palestine Foundation Fund], you should take the money from the bank, there is money there." I thought it obligatory to stand before this wave … .
>
> And this time in Eretz Yisrael, there are comments: "Don't put Eretz Yisrael in priority in this difficult time, in the time of destruction and European Jewry.' I do not accept such sayings. And when some asked me: 'Can't you give money from the Keren Hayesod to save Jews in the Diaspora'? I said: no! And again I say no! … I think we have to stand before this wave that is putting Zionist activity into second row. … I think it necessary to say here *Zionism is over everything*… [Italics mine]
>
> … [W]e must guard Zionism. There are those who feel that this should not be said at the time a Holocaust is occurring, but believe me, lately we see worrisome manifestations in this respect: Zionism is above all – it is necessary to sound this whenever a Holocaust diverts us from our war of liberation in Zionism. Our war of liberation does not arise from the fact of the Holocaust in a straight forward manner and does not interlock with actions for the benefit of the Diaspora … *And we must guard – especially in these times – the supremacy of the war of redemption* [Italics mine]. ((Gruenbaum, Yitzhak, *Bi-Mei Hurban ve Sho'ah*, p 62-70.))

The irony is overwhelming. Though the memory and imagery of the Holocaust is not far from the lips of every Israel leader, particularly the present one, and though this imagery is exploited for the sake of gaining tolerance and forbearance from the international community, as well as reparations which go well beyond actuarial merits, there was little serious concern on the part of organized Zionism for those facing extermination in Europe. Rather the Holocaust was regarded as a threat which had the potential of diverting energy and resources from the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine which was by far their highest priority.

The fact that the initiation of the Zionist project had nothing to do with the Holocaust, as it developed more than a half century earlier, and the fact of the mostly indifference to the slaughter of Jews on the part of the founders of Israel, together with its collaboration with the Nazi Party, undermines Israel's projected, and exploited, image as innocent victim.

At the end of the war a document, dated 11 January 1941, produced by Avraham Stern, proposing a military alliance and an understanding between the Third Reich and the Zionists was found in the German embassy in Ankara. It had been presented to two German diplomats in Lebanon, under Vichy at that time. The document was entitled, "Proposal for the National Military Organization (Irgun Zvai Leumi) Concerning the Solution of the Jewish Question in Europe and the Participation of the NMO in the War on the side of Germany." The NMO, later to adopt the name Lohamamei Herut Yisrael, or lehi for short, was universally known by its British designation as the Stern ang.

The document read:

> The evacuation of the Jewish masses from Europe is a precondition for solving the Jewish question; but this can only be made possible and complete through the settlement of these masses in the home of the Jewish people, Palestine, and through the establishment of a Jewish state in its historical boundaries ... The NMO, which is well acquainted with the goodwill of the German Reich government and its authorities towards Zionist activity inside Germany and towards Zionist emigration plans, is of the opinion that:
>
> 1. Common interests could exist between the establishment of a New Order in Europe in conformity with the German concept, and the true national aspirations of the Jewish people as they are embodied by the NMO.
>
> 2. Cooperation between the new Germany and a renewed volkish-national Hebrium would be possible; and,
>
> 3. The establishment of the historical Jewish state on a national and totalitarian basis, and bound by a treaty with the German Reich, would be in the interest of a maintained and strengthened future German position of power in the Near East.
>
> Proceeding from these considerations, the NMO in Palestine, under the condition the above-mentioned national aspirations of the Israeli freedom movement, *are recognized on the side of the German Reich, offers to actively take part in the war on Germany's side* [italics mine].
>
> This offer by the NMO ... would be connected to the military training and organization of Jewish manpower in Europe, under the leadership and command of the NMO. These military units would take part in the fight to conquer Palestine, should such a front be decided upon.
>
> The indirect participation of the Israeli freedom movement in the New Order in Europe, already in the preparatory stage, would be linked with a positive-radical solution of the European Jewish problem in conformity with the above-mentioned national aspirations of the Jewish people. This would extraordinarily strengthen the moral basis of the New Order in the eyes of all humanity. ((Brenner, *op. cit.*, p 267.))

The Irgun, (the MNO) under Manachem Begin, and the Stern Gang, are sometime blamed, by mainstream Zionism, as being uniquely responsible for the more grotesque atrocities of Israel's fight against both the Arabs and

against the British in its quest for statehood; for example, the bombing of the King David Hotel in 1946, in which 96 mostly civilians were killed, and the massacre at Deir Yassin. In fact, both of these actions involved the coordination of these 'dissident groups' with the *Haganah* — the military under the direction of David Ben Gurion.

Yitzhak Yzernitsky — later to call himself Yitzhak Shamir, and later to become Israeli Prime Minister, in fact, the longest serving Prime Minister of Israel except for David Ben Gurion — became the operations commander of the Stern Gang after Avraham Stern was killed by the British army in February of 1942. Under Shamir's leadership, 14 assassinations were attempted of British officials with two successful ones, of Lord Moyne, the British Minister Resident in the Middle East, sitting in Cairo, and the UN Representative to Palestine, Count Folke Bernadotte, who received three bullets in the heart on the order of Stern's operations commander and future Prime Minister – Yitzhak Shamir.

The Charter of the Stern Gang, or more accurately, the principles promulgated by Stern, included the establishment of a Jewish state "from the Nile to the Euphrates", the 'transfer of the Palestinian Arabs to regions outside of the Jewish state, and the building of the Third Temple in Jerusalem. It maintained offices outside of the Middle East – including Warsaw, Paris, London, and New York City, the latter headed by Benzion Netanyahu, the present Prime Minister's father.

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